News Articles, Infectious Diseases, Influenza, Vaccine/Immunization

CDC flu report: 3 more children have died, virus widespread in 36 states

by Melissa Jenco, News Content Editor

Editor's note: *An updated story is available at* *http://www.aappublications.org/news/2019/02/01/flu020119.*

Children continue to be hospitalized for flu at high rates and 22 have died this season, federal health officials said Friday.

The findings come as flu is now widespread in 36 states, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) weekly flu report.

The CDC estimates 9.8 million to 11.4 million people have been sick with flu this season, and 113,000 to 136,000 have been hospitalized.

Children age 4 and under have been hospitalized at a rate of 26.5 per 100,000. Just over one-third for whom information was available had an underlying condition, most commonly asthma. Hospitalization rates for the general population are 14.8 per 100,000 people.

Outpatient visits for flu increased to 3.3% last week, up from 3.1% and still above the baseline of 2.2%.

In most of the country, influenza A (H1N1)pdm09 is the main virus circulating, although the Southeast is seeing influenza A (H3). Among the three new pediatric deaths reported last week, two were linked to H1N1 and the third was an unknown influenza A virus.

The CDC and the Academy recommend everyone 6 months and older get vaccinated against the flu. Inactivated influenza vaccine is the primary vaccine choice, while quadrivalent live attenuated influenza vaccine may be used for children who would not otherwise receive a vaccine, according to AAP policy**.**

Resources

- "Recommendations for Prevention and Control of Influenza in Children, 2018-2019"
- AAP News story "How to code for flu vaccine, administration in 2018-'19 season"
- Information from the CDC about flu
- Information for parents on flu vaccine from HealthyChildren.org
- AAP News stories on flu
- Pediatrics seasonal flu article collection